The Chivalry of a Failed Knight

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Chapter 5

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UNDERDOG X MAL
#UNDERDOG at IRCHighway

CHAPTER 5: ARISUIN NAGI

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CHARACTER DESIGN: WON

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THERE EXISTED ONLY THOSE WORTHLESS INDIVIDUALS FAWNING UPON OUR FATHER, THE HEAD OF THE CLAN.

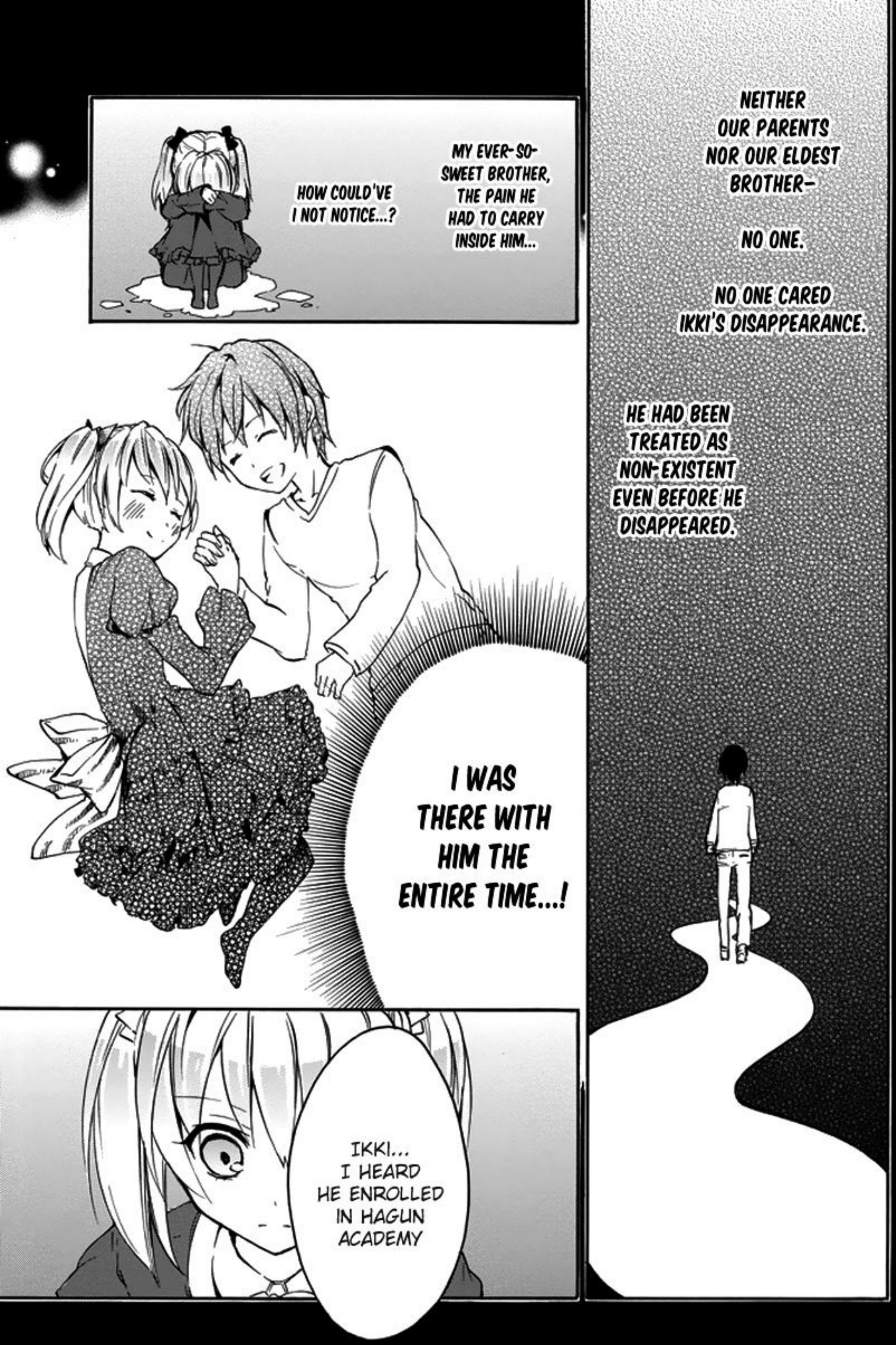
IN THE KUROGANE CLAN— THAT IS MY FAMILY,

WAS MY OLDER BROTHER, KUROGANE IKKI.

THE ONLY PERSON I COULD PLACE MY TRUST IN SUCH A HOUSE

ONLY THEN I REALIZED THE PREDICAMENT HE HAD BEEN IN

AND WHEN IKKI RAN OUT OF THE HOUSE


HOW COULD'VE I NOT NOTICE...?
MY EVER-SO-SWEET BROTHER, THE PAIN HE HAD TO CARRY INSIDE HIM...
I WAS THERE WITH HIM THE ENTIRE TIME...!
IKKI... I HEARD HE ENROLLED IN HAGUN ACADEMY
NEITHER OUR PARENTS NOR OUR ELDEST BROTHER–
NO ONE.
NO ONE CARED IKKI'S DISAPPEARANCE.
HE HAD BEEN TREATED AS NON-EXISTENT EVEN BEFORE HE DISAPPEARED.

I'LL PUT SOME WEIGHT ON THE ACADEMY.

AN EMBAR-RASSMENT TO BE SURE.

SPECTACULAR... IF WORD GETS OUT THAT AN "F" RANK CAME OUT OF THE KUROGANE FAMILY, THAT IS...

IF HE NEVER GRADUATES.

NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW,

AND SO I DECIDED.

OR THE WORLD, WOULD NOT LOVE HIM
OR MOTHER
IF FATHER

I WILL GIVE HIM EVERYTHING

WILL.
THEN I

SO THAT OTHERS MIGHT CONSIDER HIM THE MOST LOVED PERSON IN THE WORLD.

THAT WOMAN IS CONSTRAINING HIM ON THE EXCUSE OF A PROMISE, SEDUCING HIM...

STELLA VERMILLION, MY BROTHER'S SELF-PROCLAIMED SERVANT.

THAT WAS MY INTENTION...

AND YET, THERE IS CURRENTLY AN EXTREMELY UNFAVORABLE PROBLEM.

SUCH A NUISANCE!

AND APPARENTLY HAVING NOTICED MY FEELINGS TOWARDS MY BROTHER, SHE OFTEN TRIES TO PICK A FIGHT...

SHE MOST CERTAINLY HAS INTEREST IN HIM AS A MAN

第二学生寮

SIGN: STUDENT DORMITORY NO.2

MY, MY, SHIZUKU, IN A FOUL MOOD AGAIN

THAT BITCH.

YES...

ALICE...
WAS IT SOMETHING WITH THAT PRINCESS AGAIN?

ME TOO! I'M GOING TOO!

I DON'T KNOW THIS COUNTRY WELL, SO SHOW ME AROUND!

I WENT TO GO ASK ONII-SAMA OUT TO A MOVIE, AND THEN...

Oh my...

IS WHAT SHE SAID.

BEING A MAIDEN IN LOVE IS A TOUGH LIFE.

SFX: PAT

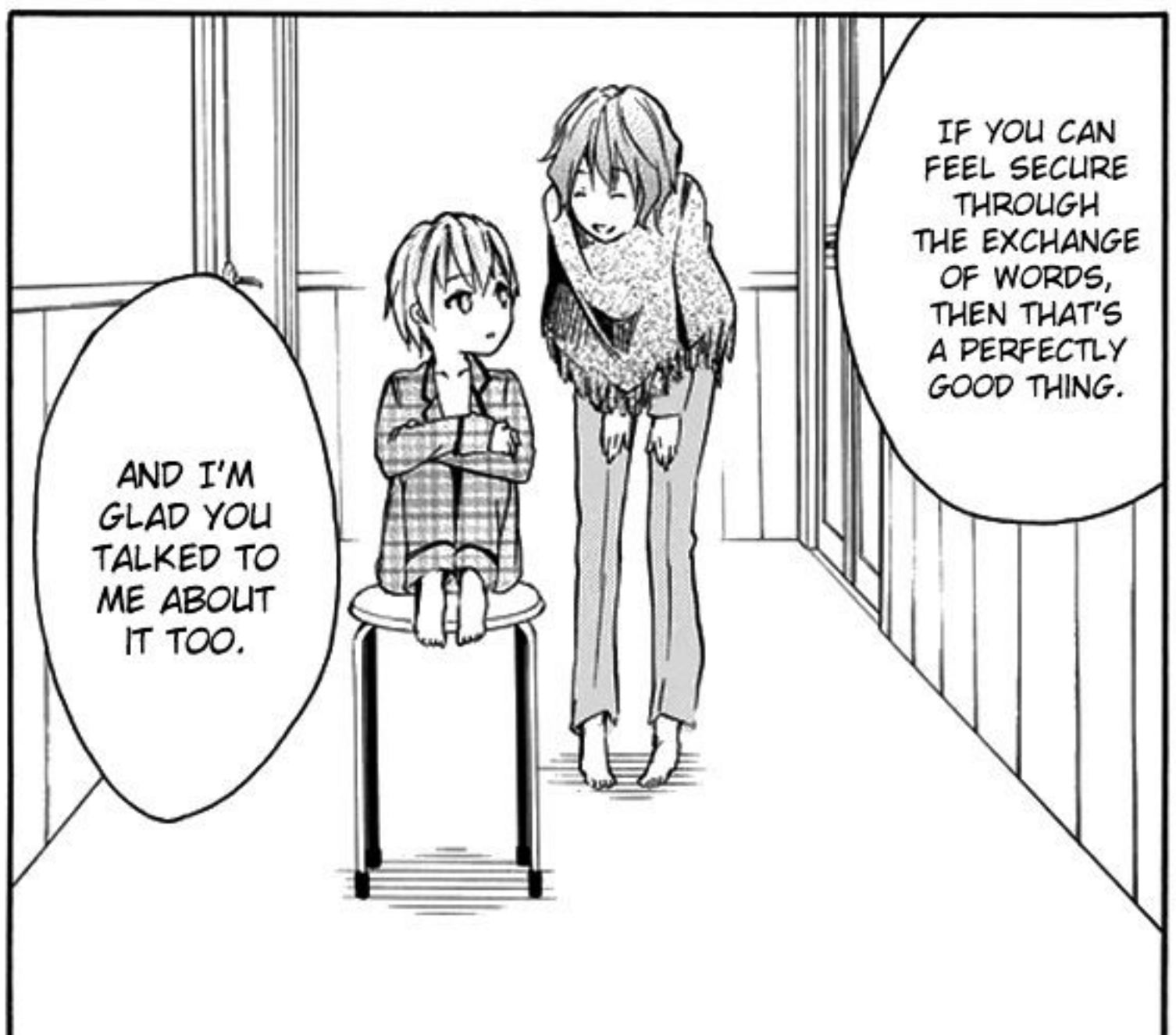
OR NO, IT'S NOT HIS FAULT, ACTUALLY.

AND ONII-SAMA TOO, BEING FOOLED BY SUCH A NONSENSICAL REASON...

...DO YOU THINK IT'S... WEIRD... FOR A SISTER TO LOVE HER OLDER BROTHER?
HEY ALICE?
THERE, YOUR HAIR'S DRY~
AND IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT'S SOCIALLY ACCEPTED.
GENERALLY SPEAKING, YES, IT SEEMS ODD.
WELL.

AND IF YOU STILL LOVE HIM, THEN I THINK THAT'S LOVE AS GOOD AS ANY.

BUT YOU REALIZE THAT ALREADY, DON'T YOU SHIZUKU?



SO YOU'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO CHANGE THAT FIRST.

HNGH.

YOUR BROTHER STILL CONSIDERS YOU HIS "LITTLE SISTER"

ALTHOUGH

I KNOW...

IF I DON'T CHANGE FROM A "SISTER" TO A "WOMAN" IN ONII-SAMA'S EYES,

MY AFFECTION WOULD BE NOTHING BUT AN ANNOYANCE.

DON'T YOU WORRY! THERE ISn'T A MAN IN THE WORLD

WHO'D DISLIKE HAVING A CUTE GIRL LIKE YOU COMING ON TO HIM.

AWWW

YOU LOOK SO CUTE WHEN YOU'RE SAD.

HEY!

BUT YOUR BROTHER IS ONE HAPPY MAN

BEING LOVED SO MUCH.

THANKS ALICE.

Uh huh.

THEN ALICE,

WHY DON'T YOU COME TO THE MOVIE TOMORROW TOO?

I ALMOST WANT TO MEET HIM.

OH, BUT WON'T I BE BARGING IN ON A DATE YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?

I JUST MIGHT BARGE IN THEN.

STELLA: I'M GOING TOO

THE DATE WAS ALREADY SABOTAGED WITH HER COMING.

That bitch

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...YES, IT IS.

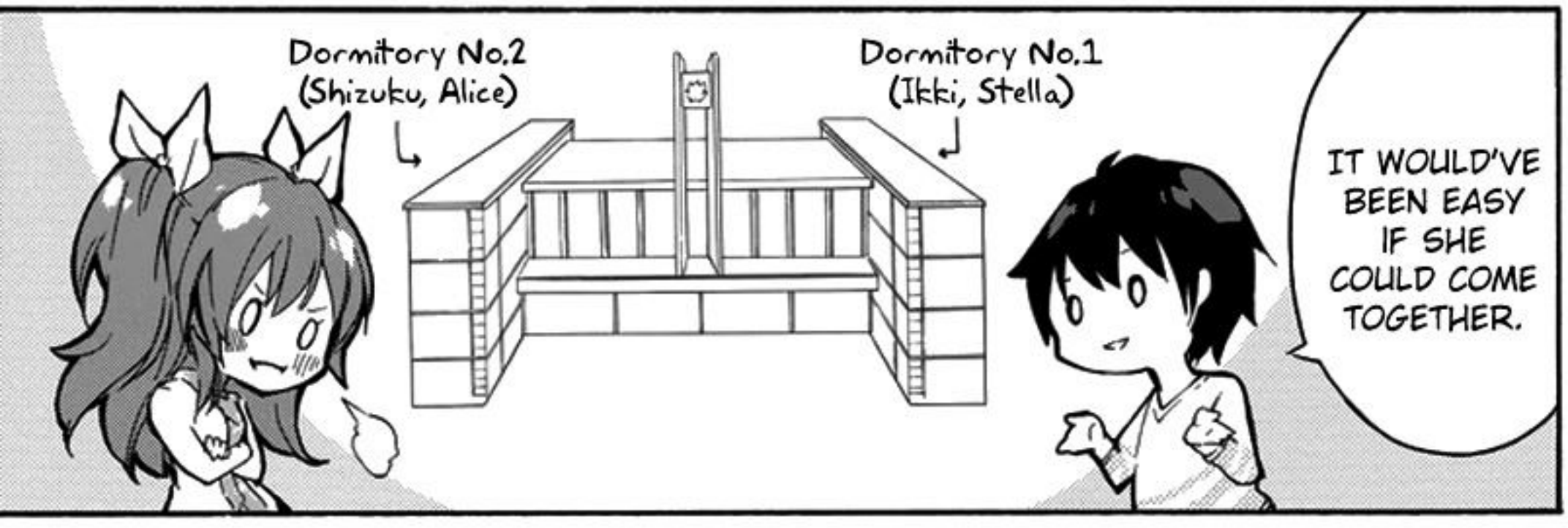
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
NO ONE CAN MATCH YOUR WILL THAT'S DRIVEN YOU TO COME AFTER YOUR BROTHER.

I'LL HELP YOU DRESS PERFECTLY FOR TOMORROW, SHIZUKU.

I'VE GOT ALICE BEHIND ME.
I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE TO SOMEONE LIKE HER.

Hmm

SHE'S LATE... I WONDER WHAT SHE'S DOING?



BUT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD INTEREST IN MOVIES, STELLA.

HUH? WHY?

AND THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IS YOUR LACK OF A SENSE OF DANGER.

THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S WAY TOO DANGEROUS TO PUT YOU AND SHIZUKU ALONE IN A DARK PLACE LIKE THAT...

HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPENED ON THE FIRST DAY?!

I'M SORRY.
IT TOOK A LITTLE TIME TRYING TO GET ON THIS THING...
S-SO LOVELY...

WHAT'S WITH THAT PERFECT MAKE-UP?!
LET ME GUESS, YOU CALLED FOR A STYLIST!
I'M NOT SOME PRINCESS, I WOULDN'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
SFX: BAM
AH, WAS IT THIS ALICE-SAN WHO IS COMING WITH US TODAY?
I HAD MY ROOM-MATE DO IT FOR ME.
WHA-
GEEZ SHIZUKU, YOU WALK TOO FAST!

NICE TO MEET YOU, I'M SHIZUKU'S ROOMMATE, ARISUIN NAGI.
IT WOULD BE HAPPIER IF YOU'D CALL ME "ALICE" ♪
H-HI...

DON'T ASK ME, I'M JUST AS CONFUSED.
HE-HEY, SHE LOOKS LIKE A GUY, RIGHT? AND TALKS LIKE A GIRL, RIGHT?!

I SAID DON'T ASK ME!
MAYBE THIS WAS A JOKE...? SHOULD I HAVE LAUGHED?
Maybe I seemed too cold...

UM... ALICE-SAN?
NO "SAN"S, PLEEEASE! I'M BAD WITH FORMAL-ITIES.

WHAT'S WITH THAT POSITIVE THINKING!?
LOOK SHIZUKU, THEY'RE TAKEN ABACK BY MY BEAUTY.

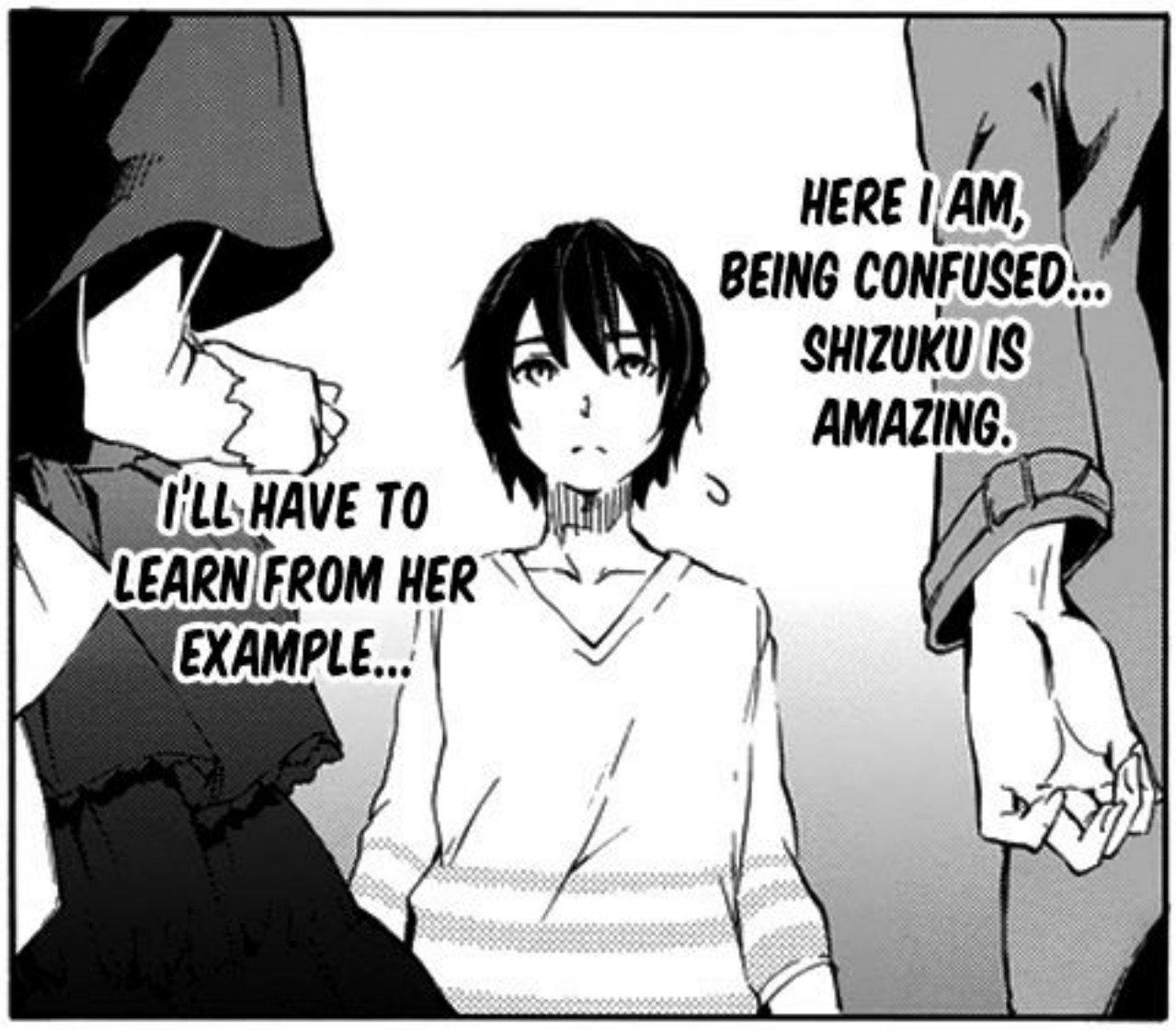
I AM...
NO.
SO ALICE, ARE YOU UM... WHAT YOU CALL A HOMO-SEXUAL?
A GIRL BORN IN A MAN'S BODY.

DON'T ASK ME!

HEY, STELLA... I DON'T GET THE DIFFER-ENCE.

THAT'S BECAUSE I DON'T CONSIDER GENDERS TO BE OF IMPOR-TANCE.
BUT SHIZUKU, YOU DIDN'T SEEM BOTHERED AT ALL FROM THE START.

IT'S OKAY, I'M USED TO IT.


HERE I AM, BEING CONFUSED... SHIZUKU IS AMAZING.
I'LL HAVE TO LEARN FROM HER EXAMPLE...

I TAKE THAT BACK
I EQUALLY HATE ALL ON THE BASIS OF THEM BEING HUMAN, SO MEN AND WOMAN ARE OF NO MATTER.

I'LL TRY...

IT'S TRUE THAT ALICE ISN'T A TYPE OF PERSON YOU SEE ALL THE TIME,

BUT PLEASE, ONII-SAMA, STELLA-SAN, DO TREAT HER AS A WOMAN IF YOU WOULD.

WELL THEN, WE SHOULD GET GOING TO THE MOVIE THEATER.

RIGHT, ONII-SAMA?

WHOA!

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SFX: SQUEEZE

JUST GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE BROTHER-AND-SISTER CONTACT, WHY?

JUST WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

HEEEEY!

Y-YEAH...

WHEN SHE PUTS IT THAT WAY...

WE USED TO WALK LIKE THIS WHEN WE WERE SMALL, DIDN'T WE ONII-SAMA?

THEN I'LL-

OH

クス

SO A LOWLY SERVANT TRIES TO WALK ALONGSIDE HER MASTER?

SFX: SNICKER

SFX: SMASH

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SO YOU MAINTAIN THAT YOU'RE ONII-SAMA'S SERVANT, AND YET YOU DON'T FOLLOW THROUGH ON THE INCONVENIENT THINGS?

IT'S ALMOST AS IF IT SHOWS THE VERMILLION FAMILY'S SHAL-LOWNESS.

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STELLA-SAN, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HOLD HANDS WITH ONII-SAMA, WHY NOT?

BUT THAT'S OKAY.

STELLA-SAN, COULD IT BE THAT TOWARDS ONII-SAMA, YOU'RE...?
ALTHOUGH, WANTING TO HOLD HANDS WITH A MAN WHO ISN'T OF YOUR FAMILY...
SFX: BLUSH
THEN THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO HOLD HANDS THEN.
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!
I'M IKKI'S SERVANT ONLY BECAUSE I LOST IN A DUEL!

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NOT GOING TO OGLE HER YOU SAID... YOU SIS-CON PERVERT...

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SFX: GLOOM

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WITH THESE THREE OVERLY-COLORFUL INDIVIDUALS ...?

AM I GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THIS PEACEFULLY...

FANTAS-TIC!

THIS CREPE IS

BUT I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT.

I RECOMMENDED THIS PLACE TO KILL TIME BEFORE THE MOVIE STARTS,

IT IS... I SHIED AWAY FROM CREPES BECAUSE THEY'RE EXPENSIVE

BUT THESE ARE QUITE GOOD

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YOU'RE PRETTY KNOWLEDGE-ABLE, AREN'T YOU?

BUT IF YOU WANT ICE CREAM, YOU'RE BEST BET WOULD BE THIRTEEN ICE CREAM ON THE THIRD FLOOR.

ISN'T IT? THE CREAM THEY USE IS VERY TASTY.

I'M NOT SURE I COVER THE CLOTHES A PRINCESS WOULD WEAR, BUT I CAN DEFINITELY RECOMMEND A COUPLE PLACES FOR SWEETS.

REALLY?!

IF IT'S ANYTHING ABOUT SWEETS OR CLOTHING, ALICE IS THE PERSON TO ASK.

YOU SHOULD COUNT ON HER TOO, STELLA-SAN.

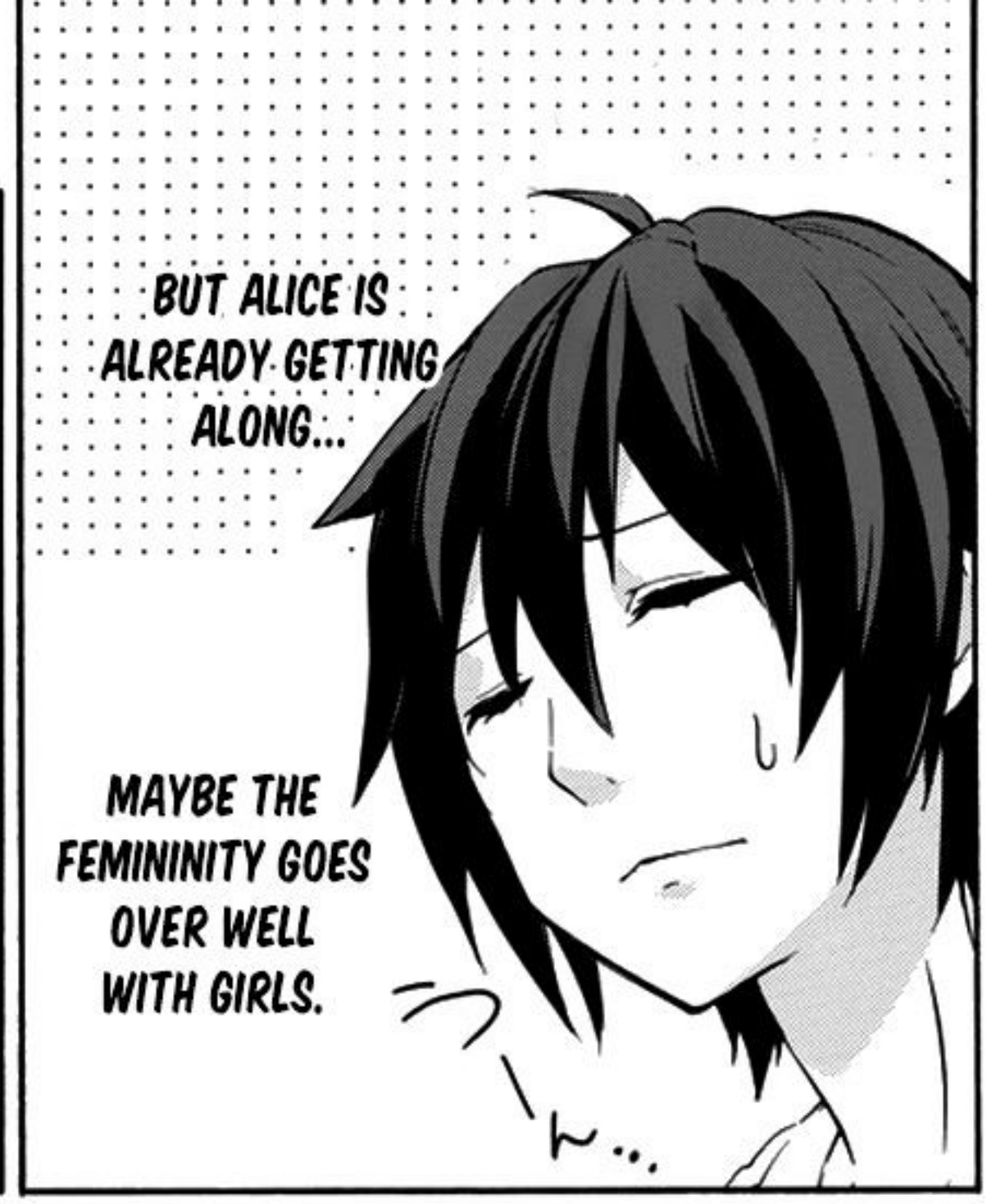
LET'S SEE... THERE IS THAT TIRAMISU AT THAT CAFE OVER THERE...

WHAT OTHER PLACE DO YOU KNOW ABOUT?!

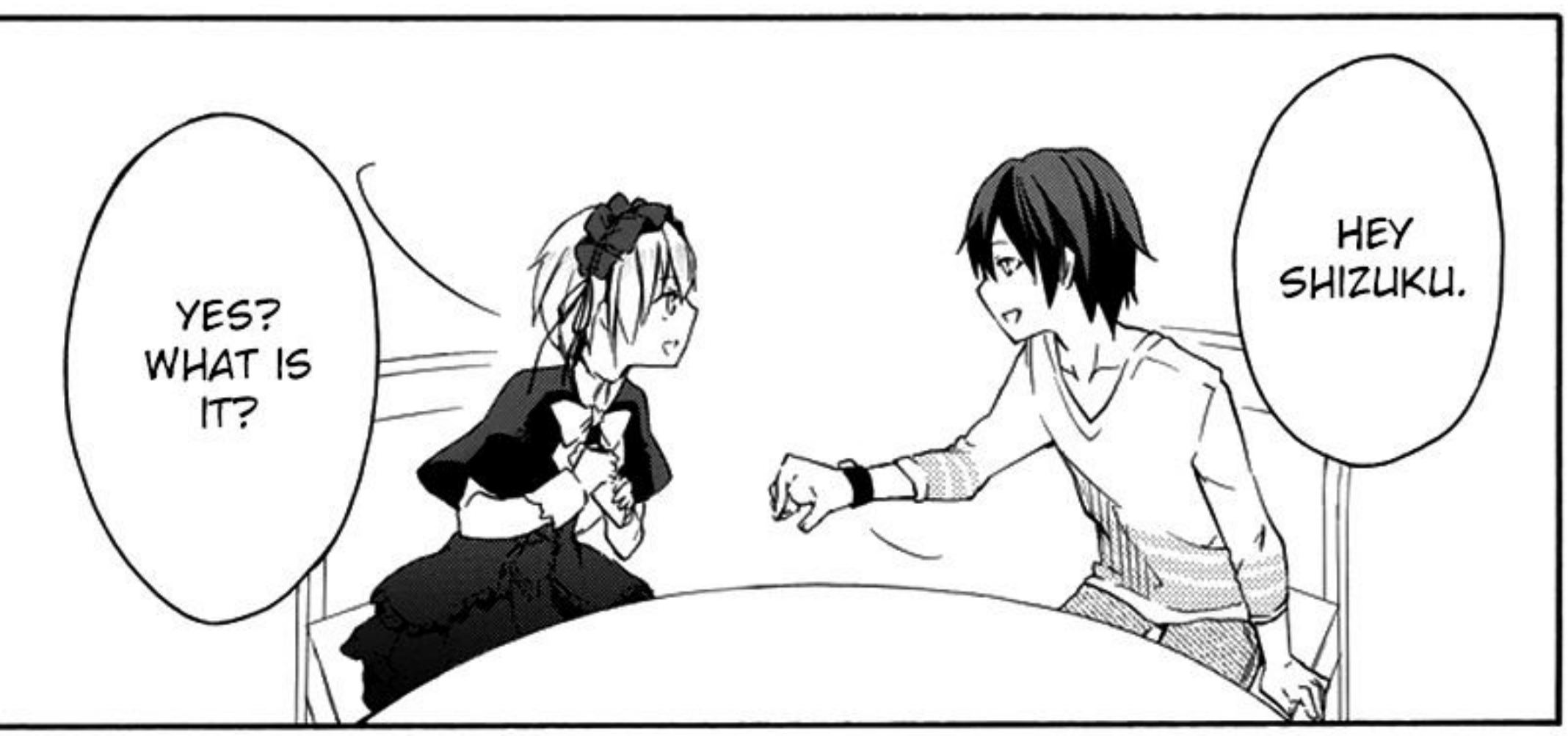
PLEASE DO TELL!

SFX: SLUUURP

HUH?


BUT ALICE IS ALREADY GETTING ALONG...
MAYBE THE FEMININITY GOES OVER WELL WITH GIRLS.

GEEZ~


HEY SHIZUKU.
YES? WHAT IS IT?

YOU HAVE TO WATCH OUT, IT'LL RUIN THE BEAUTIFUL LOOKS.
YOU'VE GOT CREAM ON YOUR FACE.
SFX: BLUSH

SH-SH-SHUT UP!

I-I WAS JUST SURPRISED BECAUSE I DIDN'T EXPECT IT!

MY MY, ARE YOU ALL FOR OFFENSE BUT NO DEFENSE, SHIZUKU?

SFX: EHEM-HEM

OH, WHAT'S WRONG IKKI... YOU LOOK SUR PRISED. IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?

I'M MORE SURPRISED ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU DON'T THINK THERE IS.

SFX: SPLAT

IT'S A CUTE KIND OF CLUMSY THOUGH.
STELLA-SAN... ARE YOU AN IDIOT?
I'M SERIOUS!
SH-SH-SH-SHUT UP! IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD SOMETHING ELSE IN MIND!
MY HAND JUST SLIPPED!

TEXT: OKAYY

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SO LET'S HEAD UP TO THE THEATER ON THE FOURTH FLOOR.
IT'S ALMOST TIME.

SEE YOU LATER THEN.

SORRY SHIZUKU, I GOTTA GO TO THE WASHROOM FIRST.
COULD YOU BUY MY TICKET FOR ME?

THEN I MIGHT JOIN YOU.

I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU FROM SHIZUKU.

I GUESS THAT GOES FOR ME TOO.

SO I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU IN PRIVATE TO GET TO KNOW YOU.

WHAT'S WITH THAT LOOK.

HUH.
BUT I AM A WOMAN, YOU KNOW?

AND SHIZUKU'S SUCH A HARD WORKER, YOU KNOW?

BUT I SEE YOU CARE FOR YOUR SISTER, IKKI.
WELL, SHIZUKU WAS SO CUTE, SHE SEEMED LIKE A LITTLE SISTER. SO I COULDN'T JUST LET HER BE...

I GUESS SHE'S LOOKED AFTER SHIZUKU IN A PROPER WAY...

SO I WAS PURELY INTERESTED

IN THE "ONII-SAMA" SHE SO AFFECTIONATELY TALKED ABOUT.

WHICH IS WHY THERE IS SOMETHING BOTHERING ME.

MAY I?

WHAT IS IT?

THE KUROGANE IKKI MENTIONED THROUGH HER WORDS WAS A VERY STRONG, LOVELY MAN.

AND YOU ARE IN ACTUALITY.

THE NEW DIRECTOR JUST HAPPENED TO CHANGE POLICIES THIS YEAR,

BUT IF THIS WASN'T THE CASE, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?

YOU COULDN'T HAVE A SINGLE BATTLE LAST YEAR, DUE TO INTERFERENCE FROM YOU CLAN, IS THAT RIGHT?

I WOULD'VE DONE WHAT-EVER I COULD.

AND THERE IS NOTHING MORE HONORABLE THAN BRINGING OUT A "SWORD KING OF THE SEVEN STARS".

THEY CAN SEE THROUGH A STUDENT'S STRENGTH WITHOUT THE PROOF OF AN ACTUAL BATTLE.

ALMOST ALL INSTRUCTORS IN A KNIGHT SCHOOL ARE PROFESSIONAL MAGICAL KNIGHTS.

BUT I WANT TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES WHERE I CAN,

SO I DO HAVE TO THANK THE DIRECTOR.

I SEE. NOW I UNDER-STAND.

SO NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES IT'LL TAKE,

I JUST HAVE TO MAKE THEM SEE THAT I "MIGHT MAKE A SWORD KING."

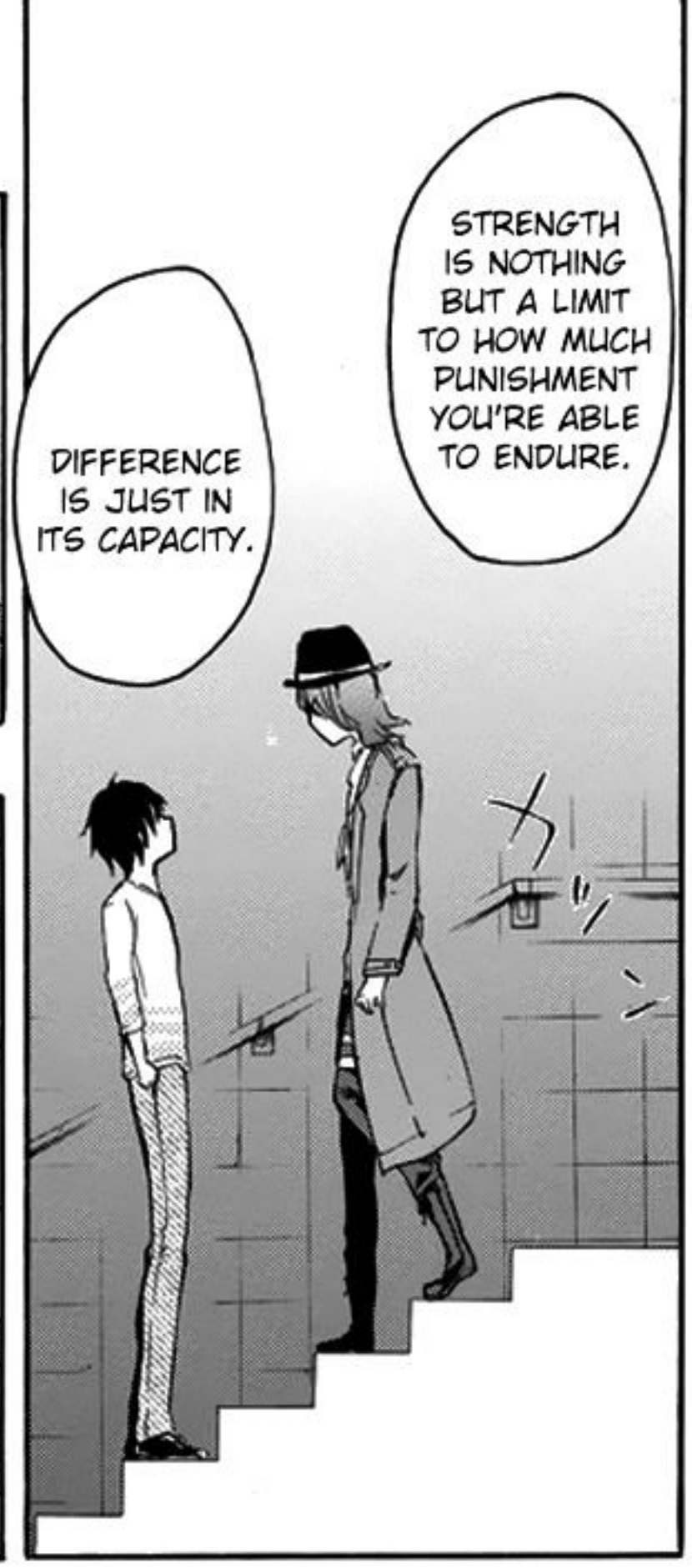
I JUST HAVE TO BECOME STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM THINK SO.

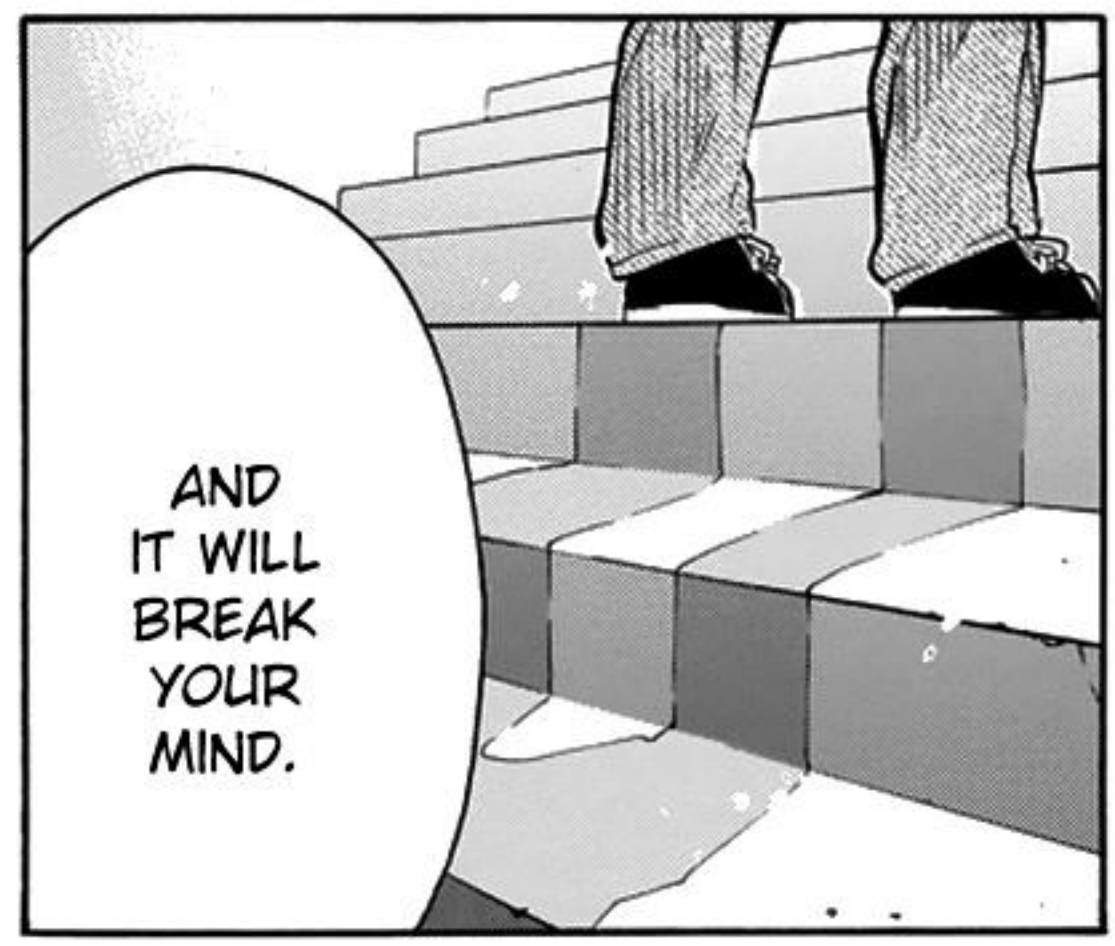
IKKI...

YOU'VE BECOME USED TO BEING HURT.

...HUH?

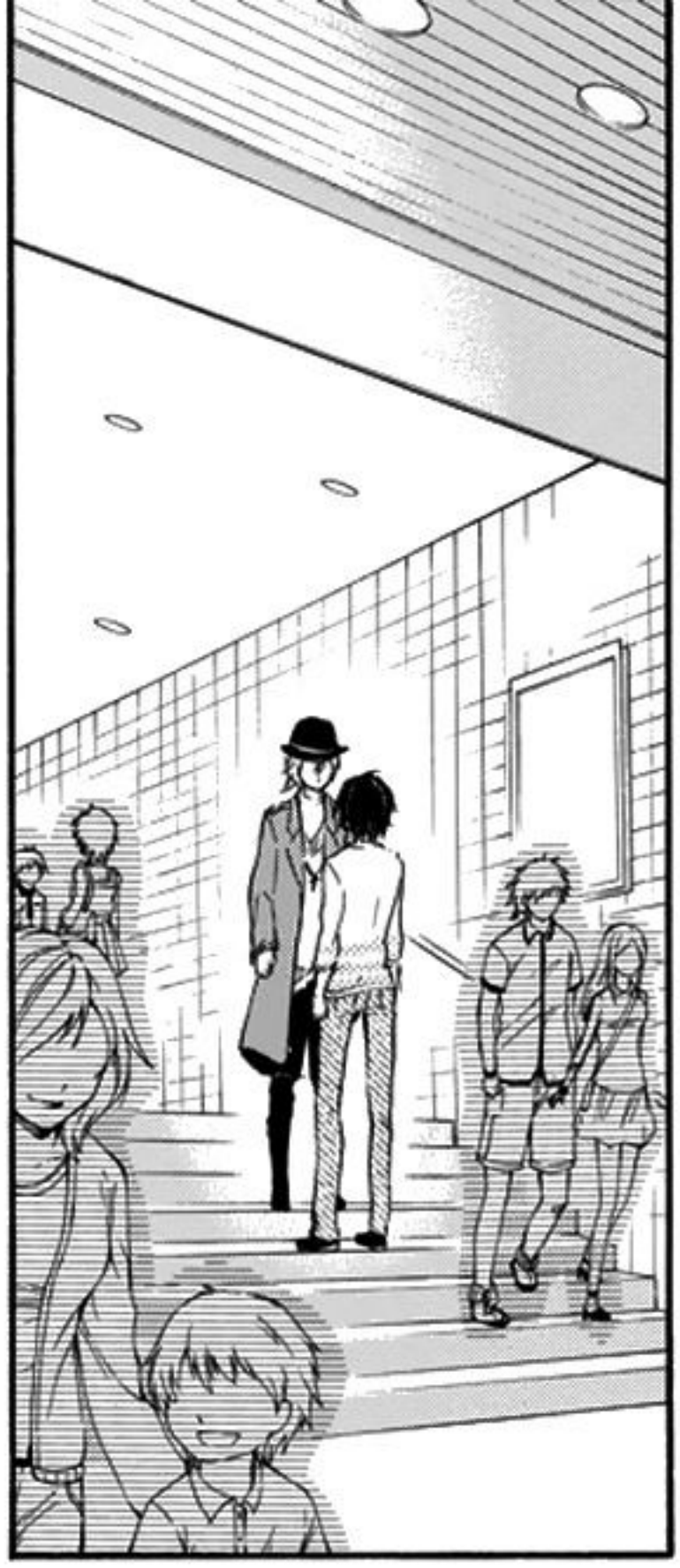
BUT IF YOU DON'T LET IT OUT SOMEWHERE, AND CONTINUE TO BURDEN YOURSELF, IT WILL OVERLOAD YOU...


STRENGTH IS NOTHING BUT A LIMIT TO HOW MUCH PUNISHMENT YOU'RE ABLE TO ENDURE.
DIFFERENCE IS JUST IN ITS CAPACITY.


AND IT WILL BREAK YOUR MIND.

HE CAN NO LONGER HEAR THAT SCREAM.

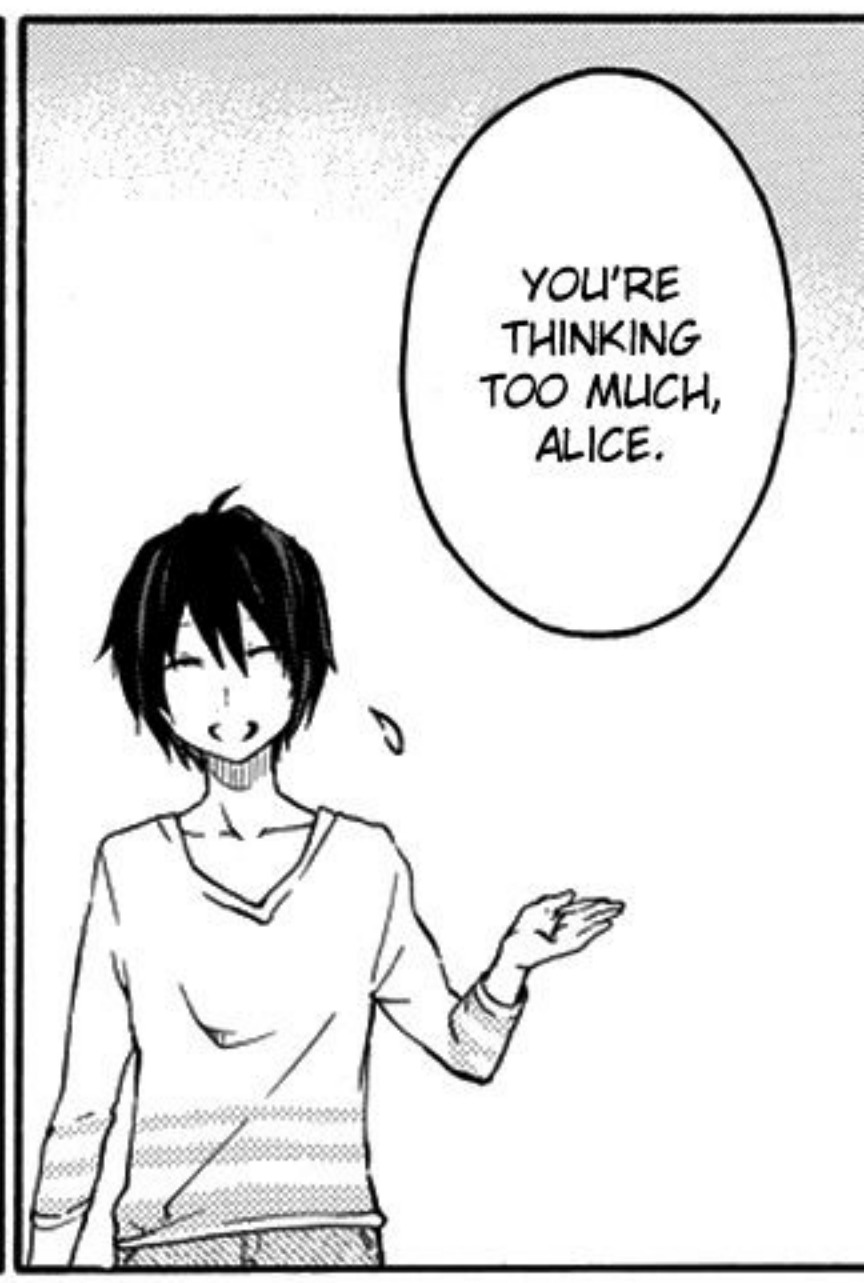
THAT IS WHY YOU NEED TO LET OUT THE ANGER AND SADNESS BEFORE IT DOES.
BUT TO SOMEONE WHO ACCEPTS ALL OF THAT...



...BUT I FEEL ANGRY AND SAD SOMETIMES TOO.

NO.
IF YOU CAN HEAR YOUR MIND SCREAMING,
YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STAY SO CALM.

WELL...
YOU'VE ONLY MET ME MOMENTS AGO, SO I SUPPOSED MY WORDS WOULDN'T HAVE ENOUGH WEIGHT.


YOU'RE THINKING TOO MUCH, ALICE.

MY MIND'S... SCREAMS?
IKKI... AS YOUR FRIEND, I HOPE FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, THAT YOU WOULD MEET SOMEONE
WHAT DOES ALICE... SEE?
WHO CAN HEAR THE SCREAMS OF YOUR MIND THAT EVEN YOU CANNOT HEAR.
HUH?
IKKI, OVER HERE!
YOU NEED TO GO TO THE WASH-ROOM THAT BADLY?!
ハァ

!!!
WHAT THE HELL?!
WHA-
Uwah!
Kyaah!

Uwaaah
Kyaaah
SORRY 'BOUT CRASHING THE FUN
BUT WE JUUUST NEED YOU ALL TO TAKE PART IN A PARTY.
AN INCIDENT DESTROYS A PEACEFUL EVERYDAY LIFE...!
9/4